



13th August 2020

Deputy Pauline Tully,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

PQ 19367/20 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of children in each county on the waiting list for occupational therapy in 2019 and to date in 2020, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PQ 19368/20 - To ask the Minister for Health the number of adults in each county on the waiting list for occupational therapy in 2019 and to date in 2020, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

- Pauline Tully

Dear Deputy Tully

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for response.

The spread of COVID-19 is posing significant challenges for many service areas, including all Therapy Services. In light of these unprecedented challenges together with the Government's guidance on social distancing and on 'Cocooning' for those aged over 70, the HSE has had to reassess its operation of Community Therapy Services nationally, to ensure that the assessed needs of those clients with the highest priority are met.

Waiting list data is collated on a monthly basis. In order to most accurately answer this question, figures from June 2020 which are the most recent available at this time, and figures from December 2019 have been used, both of which contain figures for both patients aged 0 – 17 years and 11 months, and over 18 years. Note that as a result of the national effort across all Community Healthcare Organisations throughout the country, some aspects of normal monthly reporting have been delayed. Please see below appendices which contain the following in tabular form;

Appendix 1 – Occupational Therapy – Total Number of patients awaiting First Time Assessment - June 2020

Appendix 2 – Occupational Therapy – Total Number of patients awaiting First Time Assessment – December 2019

Please note the list of LHO areas at the bottom of the Appendix which did not return data, as some areas were not in a position to return data due to staff being redeployed to Covid-19 related duties. Please also note that because of this the overall accuracy of the waiting list data is impacted.

The HSE is working to ensure timely access to children and adults requiring therapy services, and to reduce long waiting times for these important services.

As this is an evolving and unprecedented situation, the HSE will keep matters in review and will advise clients and/or family members accordingly.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Siobhán McArdle', written in a cursive style.

Pp

Siobhán McArdle,
Head of Operations Primary Care,
Community Operations